

## SAFETY TIPS TO CONSIDER BEFORE GOING ON VACATION



Here are some steps you can take to tighten security before you hit the road.

- **Tell a neighbor your travel plans.** Ask them to help keep an eye on your property and alert you of any suspicious activity.
- **Lock all your windows and doors.** Don't forget about doors leading to the garage or second-story windows.
- **Have mail and newspaper delivery stopped.** A stack of mail and newspapers or garbage cans left at the curb are signs that nobody's home. You can temporarily stop delivery by contacting your newspaper carrier and the United States Post Office. And recruit a neighbor to bring in the garbage bins.
- **Hire someone to help you keep up on yard work.** An overgrown lawn or unshoveled walkway is a dead giveaway that no one's at home.
- **Make sure any yard tools are put away.** A ladder, rakes, and even patio furniture can all be used as tools to gain entry to your home.
- **Don't post your travel plans on social media**—if a burglar spots your post, it can turn your home into a target.

Here are some travel tips to help you safely navigate the airport both during the pandemic and any time you fly:

- **Watch your bags.** You need to keep a close eye on your luggage at all times, even once you board the plane.
- **Team up.** If you're traveling alone, try to find someone in line to befriend. This is someone who could watch your luggage while at the counter or going through security.
- **Protect your laptop.** When going through security, put your laptop on the x-ray belt last. This way, your laptop will come out after your carryon luggage and hopefully about the time you are cleared. You don't want your laptop in the open position for too long.
- **Store your carry-on nearby.** On the airplane, if you don't put your luggage under the seat in front of you, put it in the overhead bin across the aisle from you. You'll be able keep an eye on your bag during the flight to ensure nobody is opening your luggage.

A few final tips:

- **Stay off social media.** Don't tip criminals off by sharing too much information on your social networks. Refrain from posting photos, status updates, or "checking in" while on vacation. Even if you have the highest security settings on Facebook and Twitter, your personal information could still be seen by unwanted eyes.
- **Tell friends and family at home your itinerary.** It's a good idea to tell family and friends about your plans. Always let someone know when you're expected to be back and what route you're planning to take.
- **Keep cash and credit cards in separate places.** Never carry your credit cards, cash, and passport at the same time. You'll want to keep some cash in your wallet, and then stash the rest in a pocket or money pouch. If you have a safe in your hotel room, leave the majority of your cash there and only bring what you'll need for the day.
- **Make a copy of your passport.** You'll want to make two copies of your passport. Leave one copy at home with a trusted friend or family member and take another copy with you. When you go out sightseeing, take the copy with you and leave the original in a hotel safe until you are ready to travel again.
- **Do a security sweep of your hotel room.** Always keep your hotel door locked and never answer it for someone you don't know. If you can, try to get a room near the front desk or the elevator.